

## APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes

**For the Meeting Held On** March 10, 2015

**Meeting Time :** 6:40 pm

**Location :** Council on Aging Media Room – 328 N. Main St. East Longmeadow, MA

**Meeting Posted On:** **Day:** Wednesday **Date:** 2 / 4 / 2015  
(48 hrs required)

**Is Meeting Being Recorded by Digital Recorder:** Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_  
**The Minutes of this Meeting are being taken by:** Marge Larocca

**Committee Members:** (check if attended)

Eric Madison	✓	Russell Denver	✓	James Broderick	✓	James Walsh	
Dawn Starks	✓	Rocco Carabetta	✓	Sam Pizzanelli	✓	Sara Menard	✓

Attendees: Thomas Florence, Paul Federici, Billy Gorman, Angela Thorpe, Nick Breault.

**Did the Chair release any prior Executive Session Minutes?**

Yes		No	x
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**Dates of Executive Session Released :**

## TOPIC / MATTER #1

### Budget Review – Town Clerk, Treasurer, Collector

#### Summary of Matter Discussed :

- The Chairman called the meeting to order and welcomed the Town Clerk-Treasurer-Collector to the meeting.
- Mr. Florence gave a description of the Town Clerk-Treasurer-Collector's budget. He stated that the budgets are based upon the Appropriations Committee's guidelines and there are no increases included. He added that additions are shown in the supplemental budget. Mr. Florence gave a description of the items contained within the Miscellaneous budget line item. Discussion followed about banking fees and tax title expenses. The Chairman expressed his concern that the tax title is behind and asked Mr. Florence about what he needs to deal with it. Mr. Florence gave an explanation of the costs, current status and the timeframe for completion. Mr. Florence then gave a description of firms that purchase tax title accounts from municipalities. The Chairman directed Mr. Florence to request a reserve fund transfer to do the tax title through the Collector's Office and to add the dollars to the budget for tax title. Discussion followed about online payment fees and e-billing.
- Mr. Florence explained that the increases shown in the supplemental budget are for salaries. Discussion followed about adjustments to items in the budget.
- The Chairman directed Mr. Florence to submit a revised budget showing the adjustments that were discussed.

#### Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:

- Town Clerk-Treasurer-Collector budget

#### Votes Taken Under this Matter :

- None

## **TOPIC / MATTER #2**

### **Budget Review – Board of Selectmen**

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#### **Summary of Matter Discussed :**

- The Chairman welcomed the members of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator to the meeting. The Board of Selectmen meeting was opened concurrently with the Appropriations Committee meeting.
- The Town Administrator distributed budgets. He explained that they were preliminary as there are slight differences in the budgets, and that revised budgets will be submitted.
- The Town Administrator stated that the Board of Selectmen had reviewed all of the departmental budgets. He followed with a description of the Animal Control Officer's budget, noting the changes that were made. He added that the supplemental budget had been approved by the Board of Selectmen and that a revised budget would be submitted along with the supplemental budget.
- The Town Administrator gave a description of the Board of Health Budget. He indicated that there were increases included and that the Board is still discussing the health agent. He followed with a description of the health agent position and what was included in the supplemental budget.
- The Appropriations Chairman let it be known that there are only three weeks until the public budget hearing and the printing of the warrant. He said that it will be tough to introduce expensive budget items.
- The Town Administrator stated that he is waiting for direction from the Board of Selectmen as to their support of a supplemental budget for the Board of Health.
- The Town Administrator spoke about the Board of Selectmen's budget, and noted that some information related to salaries is pending negotiations. Discussion followed about conference costs, and the Appropriations Chairman indicated that the base budget should be revised to include conference costs.
- The Town Administrator gave a description of increases in the Legal budget. Discussion followed about labor counsel costs and if they would be affected by having human resource personnel. The Town Administrator followed with a description of the increases in the Trash budget. He spoke about the prior year's contract, and gave an update on the current status. Discussion followed about various ways to fund additional staffing needs.
- The Town Administrator spoke about the Veterans Services budget. He followed with an explanation of the estimate of the Town's assessment, and gave a description of the Veterans' Service agent and what comprises the costs of veterans' services.
- The budget for emergency preparedness was distributed and the Town Administrator explained the small increase. The Chairman asked about the \$7,000.00 radio item in the budget. The Town Administrator said that he would send the information pertaining to it. Discussion began next about the Celebrations, Cultural and Historical budget.
- The Town Administrator spoke about a proposal to create a Human Resources Department and followed with a description of its components. Discussion followed next about the plan and timeframe for Town Hall improvements that the DPW put together and about the methods for its funding.
- The Appropriations Chairman asked the Board of Selectmen members when they will have their budgets available so that the Committee can formulate their recommendations. It was expressed that the Board of Selectmen would have their decisions for next Tuesday.

#### **Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:**

- FY16 Selectmen's departmental budgets.

#### **Votes Taken Under this Matter :**

- None

## **TOPIC / MATTER #3**

### **Review FY16 Sources & Uses**

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#### **Summary of Matter Discussed :**

- The Appropriations Chairman gave an overview of the budget and stated that the current FY16 Sources & Uses document doesn't reflect any of the changes that were discussed tonight.
- The Appropriations Chairman spoke about projections in the document that were adjusted and gave a description of the proposed increased tax rate.
- Discussion began about a warrant article submitted by the DPW for Town Hall repairs. The Chairman of the Board of Selectmen said that he would talk with the DPW regarding the warrant article. Discussion followed about Town Hall renovations and about various procedures in the setting of the tax rate.
- The Appropriations Chairman stated that in order to keep the tax rate down there will need to be a loss in services and that increases in the tax levy should be done incrementally.
- Discussion followed about methods to increase revenue with adoption of the meals tax, eliminating health insurance for elected officials and plan changes for employees insurance.
- The Board of Selectmen adjourned their portion of the meeting at 8:52 PM

#### **Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:**

- None

#### **Votes Taken Under this Matter :**

- None

## **TOPIC / MATTER #3**

### **General Discussion**

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#### **Summary of Matter Discussed :**

- The Appropriations Chairman announced that the next meeting would be used to formulate decisions on the budgets that were presented tonight. He said that the final departments will meet with the committee the following week and that it will give the committee one week to make final adjustments for the budgets.
- Mr. Carabetta said that he would check on the Capital Planning details of the Town Hall renovations and bring the information back to the committee. Mr. Broderick stated that he would meet with the DPW director to discuss the Town Hall renovations.
- The Chairman stated that he received a revised school budget. Mr. Pizzanelli gave an explanation of a conversation with the IT Director regarding his budget, and that there were no changes made in the IT budget.

#### **Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:**

- None

#### **Votes Taken Under this Matter :**

- None

**9:09 PM: Motion to Adjourn**

**Next Meeting: March 17, 2015 – 6:30PM – Council on Aging – Conference Room**

<b>MEETING FOLLOW UP:</b>
<b>PRIOR MEETING NOTES:</b>
Note: Set date for Auditor's budget forum
<b>Committee Goals :</b>
Health Insurance Plan Designs
Health Insurance for part-time Elected Officials
Meal Tax generation
Professional Development Class
Increase OPEB Appropriation
Establish a Capital Planning Budget